

Michael "Mike" Villarreal

Biography

State Representative Mike Villarreal was born and raised in San Antonio Texas. His father immigrated to the United States from Mexico with his family as a child. His mother is a product of the Edgewood community on the West Side of San Antonio. Together they taught their children the importance of earning an education, working hard and aspiring for a better life.

Mikes parents sent him to Catholic schools: St. Lukes Catholic Elementary and Central Catholic High School. While at Central, he began taking classes at San Antonio College. He went on to receive an economics degree at Texas A&M University and later earned a masters in public policy from Harvards Kennedy School of Government.

Mike's professional background is in finance. He has worked at the Federal Reserve Board of Governors, and JP Morgan Securities. His last job in public finance was directing the San Antonio office for Public Financial Management, the nation's leading public finance advisory firm.

Mike is currently working on earning his Ph.D. in Public Policy at the University of Texas in Austin. After completing his degree, he plans to teach and research within his areas of focus in the legislature: public finance and education policy.

In 1999, Mike launched a grassroots campaign for the Texas House of Representatives. His prior elected experience was serving as vice president of his neighborhood association in Beacon Hill. To win his election, Mike knocked on over 4,000 doors to meet his voters one-on-one. On election night, Mike won by one vote, defeating a judge backed by the local political establishment.

Mike is in his 7th term in the Texas House of Representatives advancing a public agenda to transform Texas into an educated economic powerhouse. Mike is known as a lawmaker who listens to all sides, studies the issues, and reaches his own independent decisions. His legislative accomplishments include securing a funding expansion for financial aid for college students, establishing state oversight of tax refund anticipation loans, and authorizing an innovative clean energy financing program. In 2011 Texas Monthly, Texas Observer and the San Antonio Current recognized Mike as one of the best state legislators.

Mike is married to Jeanne Russell. They are raising two children, Bella and Marcos, and are active volunteers at their school.

Mike brings a great sense of humor to his work. He lived in a state park during the 80th legislative session when the state was renewing its parks department. He appeared on the Daily Show with Jon Stewart poking fun at proposed legislation to regulate sexy cheerleading.

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